

MEROZ Curled.
OR,
A SERMON,

PREACHED
To the Honourable House
OF
COMMONS,

At their late Solemn FAST, Febr. 23. 1641

By STEPHEN MARSHALL, B. D.
Minister of Finchingsfield in Essex.

Published by order of that House.

PSALM. 122. Vers. 6, & 9.

*Pray for the peace of Ierusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.
Because of the House of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good.*



LONDON,

Printed by R. BADOER, for SAMUEL GILLIBRAND,
at the Boyes's Tavern in St. Pauls Church-Yard.
1641.

MS. V. 1.
14. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.

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At their late Solemn Fast, Febr. 23. 1641

By STEPHEN MARSHALL, B. D.

Minister of Rochester in Kent

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Printed in the Year 1641

By J. B. at the Sign of the Gun, in the Strand, near the Church of St. Dunstons



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1641

TO THE
Honourable
HOUSE OF COMMONS.
NOW ASSEMBLED IN
PARLIAMENTS

I*t is fit my obedience
should last as long as your
commands, for so I
have alwayes interpreted your
Requests and desires to be. As I
never had the confidence to pre-
sent you with any thing proper-
ly mine, so neither will I bee
guilty of that Injustice, as to
deny you any thing so truly your
own, as is this fruit of my poore
yet willing endeavours. It is
yours truly, but most princi-
pally*

pally the Churches, whose both
you, and I, and all that you can
doe, or I speak, are. If it may
be serviceable to you, and you
by it made more serviceable to
the Church and cause of God,
I have my option. But I am
resolved not to make that use of
my experience of your patience
in hearing the Sermon, as to
try it further with the length of
a Dedication: Only I thinke it
my dutie to second my propositi-
on with my prayers, That God
would vouchsafe a blessing to
your endeavours for his Church,
and to you for your endea-
vours. These shall be the con-
stant and earnest desires of

Your Servant

Stephen Marshall



A
SERMON

PREACHED

At the late FAST

BEFORE

The COMMONS HOUSE

OF

PARLIAMENT.

JUDGES V. XXIII.

*Curse ye Meroz (said the Angell of the Lord) curse
ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came
not to the helpe of the Lord, to the helpe of the
Lord against the mighty.*



Right Honourable and beloved, it hath
beene a custome almost amongst all
Nations, after any notable Victorie,
to have their *envia*, their Trium-
phant Songs, wherein the illustri-
ous acts of their owne worthy Leaders, and the
B shame

Introduction
shewing

shame and confusion of their enemies were celebrated, preserved and so delivered over to posteritie. The *Romans* had their *Salii* Priests, who after any victorie went dancing through the City, singing their *Hymnes*, and *Pæans* to *Mars*, and the rest of the favourable Gods. And the *Grecians*, sometimes in *Verses*, sometimes by *Sculpture*, used to set forth their famous Battels and Victories, yet alwayes attributing the highest glory of all to their Gods, whom they supposed to bee present with them, *Protectors* over them, and *fighters* for them. This course, I thinke, the Divell learned from the Lord *Iehovah's* dealing with his owne people, who alwayes directeth them thus to celebrate his noble acts, and their great deliverances. Thus *Moses* and *Aaron* sang unto the Lord, when he triumphed gloriously over *Pharaoh* and all his Hoast, making them sinke like a stone to the bottome of the Red Sea. Thus the women in their song and dance celebrated their victorie over the *Philistims*. And this whole Chapter is nothing but a *Triumphant song*, setting forth in an elegant and loftie verse, the great victorie which *Barak* and *Deborah* and a small armie with them had gotten, (the Lord marching before them) against King *Iabin* and his Generall *Sisera*, who for twentie yeares had mightily oppressed the children *Israel*.

Exod. 15.

1 Sam. 18.
The scope of the
Chapter.

Judg. 4. 3

In which song, First, all praise and glory is given to *Iehovah* the Lord of hoasts the Prince who lead them, by whose strength alone the victorie was obtained. Praise ye the Lord for the avenging of *Israel*. I will sing unto the Lord. Lord when thou wentest out of *Seir*, &c. Then the Song descends

to

to the *due praises* of their Generall *Barak*, and his assistant *Deborah*, yea the severall *Regiments* and Companies both of Horse and Foot doe receive the praise and reward of their courage and valour. And not only so, but the Song proceeds to *Stigmatize* and brand with reproach, and marke out for punishment all such companies, as had played either the Traitors or the Cowards, or were otherwise wanting to their dutie in this great expedition. *Reuben* had other Sheepe to turne, *bee tarried amongst his Sheepfolds to heare the bleating of his flock*. *Gilead* durst not crosse the Water, *Dan* Verse 26. cowardly withdrew into his Ships, *Ashur* durst not come from his owne coasts. God takes notice and remembers them all, and lets them know he had great thoughts of heart about it, and in time would reckon with them for it.

But above all his wrath was most incensed against *Meroz*, a people of whom we finde no mention in the whole Book of God, nor I think in any other Storie, but only in this place, upon this unhappie occasion, you can know no more of them then what this place tels you: and these few reliques of them, remain as the lake of *Sodome* as a monument of their sin, or as a Mast of a Ship swallowed up in the quicksand, to warne passengers to take heed of that dangerous place; or as *Lots Wife* turned into a Pillar of Salt, to season others. This their short Chronicle I may call their Grave-stone, which seemes to hold out such an inscription, as they say *Sennacheribs Tomb* had, *Looke upon me, and learne to be godly*. So theirs, *Looke upon mee, and learne your owne dutie*.

*Especiallly of
this verse.*

Looke upon me, and take heed of dissenting the cause and Church of God, when they stand in neede of you.

And the suitability of it to the occasion

Psalm 2. 21.

A Text and Theme exceeding *seasonable*. *Seasonable* to the *times* wherein we live, when abundance of mighty enemies rise up against the Lord, and against his Church. *Seasonable* to the *temper* of most people who generally minde their owne things, and not the things of Christ. *Seasonable* to the *occasion* of this dayes meeting, which is purposely for the helpe of the Lord, and his cause, and people now distressed in *Ireland*. But to me it seemes most of all *seasonable* for this present *honourable Assembly* who all should be as the Lord: *their Horses as his Horses, their Chariots as his Chariots*, they being all called to bee Leaders and Captaines of the Lords Host. The Lord make but as *proficable*, as I am sure it is *seasonable*, and I doubt not but we shall be exceeding gainers by it.

Division.

In this Text which I may call the *doome of Meroz*, there are these two things.

First, the *Author* of the doome or sentence, the *Angell of the Lord*. *Curse ye Meroz said the Angell of the Lord*.

Secondly, the *Sentence* given against them: *Curse ye Meroz, &c.*

Wherein likewise consider these two things.

First, What their *fault* was.

Secondly, What their *punishment* was.

Their *Fault* ye have in these words, *They came not out to the helpe of the Lord, to the helpe of the Lord against the mighty*.

Their *Punishment* was a *curse*, and a *bitter* one:

Curse

Curse ye Meroz, Curse ye bitterly, or (as the word signifies) in cursing curse the inhabitants of Meroz, continue to curse them, vehemently curse them, never leave cursing them.

I shall briefly interpret the words, and so pro-
ceede (with Gods assistance) to some profitable
instructions. And interpreta-
tion.

First, the *Angell of the Lord*. I finde great difference among Interpreters, who this *Angell* of the Lord should be. Some thinke it was *Deborah* the Prophetesse who penn'd this Song. Some thinke *Barak* the Generall was likewise at this time inspired by the Holy Ghost. Some thinke it was the Angel that lead them, *Michael* their Prince who went out with them. Some think the *Angell* of the Lord, signifies all that have *Divine inspiration*, but all agree in the intent of it, namely, that the Author is alledged, that all might know that this curse came not from the *private Spirit* of *Deborah* or *Barak* (as *Sauls* once did, when he cursed every one that should taste any meate untill the evening, that he might be avenged on his enemies) but was pronounced by the direction of God himself, and so consequently, they who are thus cursed are cursed indeed, *The Angell of the Lord*, that is *divine Authoritie*. 1 Sam. 14. 24.

2. *Meroz*. Who was *Meroz*, and what people were they? I could never learne whether *Meroz* were a *Citie* or a *Province*, few or many; rich or poore, weak or strong, in this all agree that they were *Iewes*, the *Canaanites* should not have beene cursed or not joyning with *Israel*, in their warres. All likewise agree, that they dwelt neere Mount

Tabor and the River *Kison*, the place where this battell was fought, and so consequently neere the danger: and in all probabilitie were called by *Deborah* and *Barak* to come and assist them. Which is likewise judged to bee the cause, why they had a heavier doome then any other. God cannot abide to have such ill neighbours to his people when they are in distresse.

3. *Curse* them. The word signifies, *Maledicere verbo*, *malefacere re*, to speake evill of them, to revile them, to reproach them and wish mischief to them, to doe any evill against them, to execute in deed, what they would wish in words. What the particular Curse was, or what the event of it was, no man can determine; this I finde, which is most probable, It was ordinarily observed among the Jewes, that whatsoever was justly cursed grew *unfruitfull* presently. If a *Woman* were cursed she proved *barren*. If the *Earth* were cursed, it brought forth *Briars* and *Thornes*, no profitable Seed or Plants would grow there. If *Trees* were cursed they *withered* away. If Gods curse fell upon *Houses* or *Cities*, the *Walls* and *Foundations* would fall downe. Gods curse alwayes wasted that upon which it fell. So in all likelyhood this curse is the cause wee never read more of them. If they were a *Province*, their Land proved a *desolate Wildernesse*. If a *City* it was *destroyed*, or grew *unpeopled*: this bitter curse like the *Water of Iealousie* made an end of them.

4. they came not to the helpe of the Lord against the *Mighty*. Who are these *Mighty*?
Without

Without all question by the mighty are litterally meant king *Iabin*, and his *Generall Sifera*, because these were those potent enemies, against whom the battell was fought. But in Gods intent (this being a Prophetical Song) the mighty are all, of what *ranke* or *qualitie* soever, who are eminent in *wisedome*, *strength*, *authoritie* or *riches*, and manage an *ill cause* against the Lord or against his Church.

Lastly, they came not out to the help of the Lord. By the help of the Lord you will easily conclude, that in this particular, the help of *Deborah* and *Barak* are meant. They came not to joyn with the Tribes of *Zabulon* and *Nepthali*, and that small handfull of *Israelites* who by Gods direction undertooke this battell against the great Captaine *Sifera*. Because they joyned not their strength with Gods people, they are judged not to help the Lord. For (as I shall shew anon) the Lord and his People are so *conjoynd*, that their friends are his friends, and their enemies are his enemies, and whosoever helps not *them*, are interpreted to *refuse* to *assist* the Lord himselfe. I know nothing else in the Text, that hath the least shew of difficulty.

Were this Text to bee handled at large in many Sermons, such Observations as these could not briefly be passed over: as first,

That although Gods people must (*ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ*) *blesse*, *blesse* I say, and not *curse*. Curses are edged tooles, dangerous to bee medled with, yet there may fall out such cases, that Gods blessed servants must come downe from Mount *Gerizim*, the Mount

Mount of *bleſſing*; and goe up on Mount *Ebal*, the Mount of *Cursing*; and their *curſe* and *curſe bitterly*. *Curſe ye Meroz ſaid the Angell of the Lord.*

Zech. 5. 3, 4.

Secondly, That although it be true that the curſe cauſeleſſe ſhall not come, yet when Gods people according to Gods direction, (*clauē non errante*) doe curſe, their curſe is like the *flying Roule* which we read of, *it conſumes the houſe it lights upon, the timber thereof, and the ſtones thereof.* It is like the Wolfes foot, of which they ſay, that no herbe upon which it hath once trod will grow afterwards.

Rev. 17. 18.

Thirdly, That the mighty doe frequently oppoſe the Lord, it is no new thing to finde the Mighty in ſtrength, the Mighty in authoritie, the Mightie in wealth, the Mighty in parts, in Learning, in Counſell, to engage all againſt the Lord, his Church, and Cauſe. The Lambes followers and ſervants, are often the poore and of-ſcouring of the World, when Kings, and Captains, Merchants, and Wiſemen, being drunke with the Wine of the Whores fornications, proceed to make warre with the Lambe, and to give all their ſtrength unto the Beaſt, till the words of God ſhall be fulfilled.

Fourthly, That when the mighty of the World doe oppoſe the Lord, Gods *meanest ſervants* muſt not be afraid to oppoſe the *Mighty*.

And fifthly, That whoſoever come out to joyn their ſtrength, and to give aſſiſtance to the Lords *people*, the Lord doth interpret them all to give helpe and aſſiſtance to *himſelfe*.

But

But because my discourse upon this Text, in this place must be hedg'd into one Sermon, I may not let it out into such a spacious field. I shall passe by all these and many other seasonable truths, which in this Text are obvious to all your eyes, and betake my selfe to cleare one lesson only; which you will quickly see to be the maine scope and intent, not only of this verse, but of the greatest part of this Chapter, and most seasonable for these times, for this Assembly and occasion, viz.

All people are cursed or blessed according as they doe or doe not joyne their strength and give their best assistance to the Lords people against their enemies.

The maine
Doctrin
propoun-
ded.

Explained.

I beseech you see how cleare this is, not only in this verse (God laid nothing else to Meroz charge but only this, they came not out to help the Lord against the mighty) but in other passages of this Chapter. *My heart is toward the Governours of Israel, that offered themselves willingly among the people. Hallelujah, Praise the Lord.* They are not so much as named without an Enge. The Princes of Issachar are bless'd for being with Barak. Zebulun and Nephtali were a people that jeopardded their lives to the death in the high places of the field. These are blessed also. Blessed above women was Iael the wife of Heber the Kenite. What made Iael such a blessed woman? Even this, she put her hand to the naile, and her right hand to the workmans hammer, and with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote of his head, when shee had pierced and smitten through his Temples. On the other side see the displeasure that there is against the Tribes who came not out to helpe in this expedition. Ruben had businesse of his owne, his flocks were to be attended. Gilead could plead that the River Jordan

And proved
v. 9.

v. 15.

v. 18.

v. 24.

Men are
curied or
blessed.

divided him, from Barak and his company: After
had his owne breaches to make up, and the Sea coasts
to looke to. A man might think, these were faire ex-
cuses. But God had great thoughts of heart against them
all. And woe to him, or them, against whom God
hath great thoughts. The whole Chapter runs in this
straine, they are cryed up, they are honoured and
blessed: not only the heart of Gods people, but the soule
of God himselfe (as I may say) tooke pleasure in
them, who appeared in the Churches side; his displea-
sure, indignation, wrath and curse did rise against all,
who came not to the helpe.

This is most plaine in many other Scriptures. I
shall cull out but three among three hundred, *Ier. 48.*
10. That whole Chapter containes the doome of *Mo-*
ab. Gods curse was now to be executed upon *Moab,*
and you may read of *Moab,* that the Lord once sent
to him when his people were in distresse. *Let my out-*
casts dwell with thee Moab, be thou a shelter to them in the
time of a storme. But *Moab* was too proud to listen to
Gods counsell. *Moab* was alwaies an ill enemy to
Israel. Now God comes to reckon with him for it.
Now the spoyler shall come upon all his Cities. And
to them who were to execute this vengeance of God
against them, marke what a charge is given in the
tenth verse, *Cursed is he that doth the worke of the Lord*
negligently, or fraudently, or deceitfully, as the word
signifies; Now what was the worke which was
to be done? the next words will tell you, *Cursed is e-*
very one that withhold his hand from shedding of blood:
the strangest reason of a curse that ever was read of, if
ever a man might have pleaded (with *Peter* when the
voice said unto him, *Arise Peter kill and eate*) not so

2.ord

Lord. I have not beene accustomed to this, here were roome for such a plea, when his worke was to goe and embrew his hands in the blood of men, to spill and powre out the blood of women and children, like water in every street. But he is a cursed man that withholds his hand from this, or that shall doe it fraudulent-ly, that is, if he doe it as Saul did against the Amalekites kill some and save some, if he goe not through with the worke: he is a cursed man, when this is to be done upon Moab the enemy of Gods Church. So that whatsoever employment men are put to, they are cursed men, that take not part with God in his worke. Another place you shall find in Psal. 137. v. 8, 9. The daughter of Babylon was there to be destroyed, observe now the epithete which God gives to the executioners of his wrath against Babylon. Blessed is the man that rewardeth thee, as thou hast served us. Blessed is the man that makes Babylon drinke the same cup, which Babylon had made Gods people to drinke. Now he that reade the booke of the Lamentations, may finde how Babylon had used the Church of God, they had broken their bones as a Lion breakes the bones of a Lamb, brought their necks under persecution, made their skin blacke like an oven, hang'd up their Princes by the hand, and which is most of all cruell, had dashed their children against the stones. Now saith the Spirit of God, Blessed is the man, that thus rewards Babylon, yea, blessed is the man that takes their little ones and dashes them against the stones. What Souldiers heart would not start at this, not only when he is in hot blood to cut downe armed enemies in the field, but afterward deliberately to come into a subdued City, and take the little ones upon the speares point, to take them by the heeles and

as they help
or help not
the Church
of God.

Men are
curled or
blesled.

beat out their *braines* against the *walles*, what inhumane and barbarousnesse would this be thought? Yet if this work be to revenge Gods Church against *Babylon*, he is a *blessed man* that takes and dashes the little ones against the stones.

But there is one Text of Scripture (if no other were to be found in the whole booke of God) which is a sufficient prooffe *th at all are blesled or curled, according as they doe or doe not helpe the Church of God in their need:* and that you shall finde, *Matth. 25. 33. &c.* The summe whereof in a few words is this, At the latter end of that Chapter is a description of the *day of Iudgement*, and of the *manner* of Christs proceeding at that day. First, that when *Iesus Christ* shall come in the glory of his Father, he will divide all the *godly* to the *right hand*, and all the *wicked* to the *left hand*, as the Shepherd divides the *Sheepe* from the *Goates*. Secondly, hee pronounces all on his right hand *blessed*, all upon the left hand *curled*, *Come yee blesled, goe ye curled*. Here are all the *blessed*, and there are all the *curled*. Mark now what is assigned as the only reason and evidence why the one sort are *blessed*, and the other *curled*. It is most plaine in the Scripture, that at *that day* the Lord will call people to an account for all *they have done in their whole course whether good or evill*. but in this place, *Christ* gathers all that shall be opened and come to receive blessing or cursing, reward or punishment to this one head, according as they *did or did not helpe and succour his Church and people in their time of need*. To the one side, *Come yee blesled, receive the kingdome prepared for you, for you visited my Church when it was sick, you gave meate to my Church when it was hungry, you gave my people*
drinke

drinke when they were thirstie, you tooke them in when they were strangers, you cloathed them when they were naked, you came to them when they were in prison: Inasmuch as you have done it unto these, even unto one of the least of these my brethren you have done it unto me. On the other side, Goe ye cursed, Why are they cursed? I was hungry and ye gave me no meate, I was thirsty and ye gave me no drinke, I was a stranger and ye took me not in, naked and you cloathed me not, sick and in prison and ye visited me not: Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as you did it not unto the least of one of these, ye did it not to me. As if the Lord at that great day did take notice of nothing, but what the carriage of all people hath beene to or against his Church and children. What greater evidence can there be in the world, that men are blessed or cursed, than this? that they either doe, or doe not help the Church of God.

as they help
or help not
the Church
of God.

This will yet be clearer if we consider the Church. First, as it stands in relation to God. Secondly, as we stand in relation to the Church.

Demonstrated.

First, as the Church stands in relation to God: when I speake of God in relation to the Church, or the Church to God; you must alwayes understand God in Christ, Emanuel. God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. And thus the Churches relation to God, gives us two excellent grounds of this doctrine.

First from
the Churches
relation
to God.

Being made
one with
him in
Christ.

First, the Church and the meanest member of it is united to him, made one with him, they are not only his servants, his friends, such as he loves, but hee and they make but one person, I meane one mysticall person. Inasmuch that throughout the whole Scripture he that bleisseth them bleisseth him, he that curseth them curseth him, hee that relieveth them relieveth him,

All are cur-
led or blec-
fed

he that fights against them fights against him, he that touches them touches the Apple of his eye, all the relations which argue intimacie, tendernesse and dearenesse, meete in this conjunction betwixt God and his Church, he is their *Father* they are his *children*, he is their *head*, they are his *members*, hee is their *husband* they are his *wife*, yea they are called by *his name* and he vouchsafes to be called by *their name*. Take but this for granted, and you will make no doubt, but all men are blessed or cursed, as they doe or doe not help the Lord. The Lord *Iehovah* is the fountaine of all blessednesse more than the Sunne is the fountaine of light, from his favour and good will necessarily flows all happinesse, and consequently all are blessed or cursed according as the aspect betweene God and them is malignant or benevolent. This ground is fully laid downe in that forementioned place, *Matthew 25. You did it to them, therefore you did it to me, you refused it to them, therefore you refused it to me.* It is clearely there taught, but I believe there is no man on earth that understands it, or believes it fully. And that very Text gives me a hint to thinke so. Because the very *righteous* themselves, though they doe all to the Saints out of the good will they beare to *Christ*, yet when *Christ* shall acknowledge this and say, *Come yee blessed, you fed me, you clothed me, you visited me, They shall answer Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or thirstie, or a stranger, or naked, or sicke, or in prison and administred unto thee?* It shews that themselvs did not fully understand how neare they were to *Christ* for whom they did all these things. I have somewhere read a storie of a *Sarazen* Embassador, who being with a *Christian* Prince and seeing Nobles and great men to wait upon him

him, and the Prince himselfe to waite upon a Table full of poore ragged people, desired to know what they were, to whom he shewed so much respect, he answered to this effect, they were the servants of his Lord, and that hee served his Saviour in them. We. I said the Embassador, if your Lord have no better servants than these, I desire to be none of them. I care not for your Religion. And truly it is a hard thing to perswade not only *Sarazens* but even *Christians* themselves, that whatsoever is done to poore abjects, the off-scouring of the world should be done to Christ himselfe. No earthly Prince would doe so, equally to accept and reward him, that should give a nights lodging or any succour to one of his meanest and basest groomes, as if it had beene done to the person of himselfe or of his son. Yet this is the very case betwixt Christ and his Church.

as they help
or help not
God, Chu.

Secondly, another ground from the Churches relation to God, is this, that as their persons are neerely united to him, so their *cause* is his cause. As they account every cause of God to be their cause, so God accounts every cause of theirs to be his cause, 2 *Chro.* 20. *Moab and Ammon* and they of *Mount Seir*, came with a huge armie against *Iehoshaphat*, hee and his people being suddenly surprised betake themselves to prayer, and seeke helpe from God: Now marke what Gods answer was, *Be not you afraid nor dismaied by reason of this great multitude, the battell is not yours but Gods.* Was not the battell theirs, all they were worth lay upon that battell, their wives and children, their lives and liberties, their countrey and religion, lay all at the stake, and yet the battell none of theirs, that is, not so much theirs as Gods, so in the

Their cause
is his cause.

Verse 15.

All are cur-
ted or blef-
sed

v. 22. 23.

the 74. Psal. When *Asaph* had laid down all the Churches sufferings, the pulling down of their Synagogues, the wasting of their Countrey, the reproach and scorn cast upon them by their enemies, he interests God in all this, *Arise O God, plead thine owne cause, remember how the foolish man reproacheth thee, forget not the voice of thine enemies.* Thus is their cause Gods cause, their enemies Gods enemies: and indeed, if we looke into it narrowly, whatsoever is done to them and their cause good or evill, is done for Gods sake. This then is a strong argument to prove men blessed or cursed, according as they joyn with, or oppose the cause of God. Because first, if it be Gods cause, it is a good cause. Secondly, it is a noble cause. Thirdly, it is a successefull cause.

Zeph. 3. 4.
Psal. 11. 7.
Therefore a
good cause.

Psal. 35. 27.

Psal. 35. 26

A noble
cause.

First, I lay it is a good cause. *The just Lord that is in the midst of his Church will doe no iniquitie. The righteous Lord loveth righteousness.* Now you know it is a blessed thing to have a good cause, though it be a meane cause. *David* often pleaded this before God, that his cause was just, his cause was upright. *Let them shout for joy, that favour my righteous cause.* And on the other side it must needs be a cursed thing to manage a cursed cause: when *David*s cause was good, his adversaries must needs bee evill, and then he could foretell that *they should be ashamed and brought to confusion, clothed with reproach and dishonour who opposed themselves against him.*

Secondly, being Gods cause, it is a noble cause, a man may possibly among men have a good cause and the thing but a trifle, a thing of no great consequence: but if it be Gods cause, let it appeare never so contemptible, it is subservient to the highest end, that can possibly

sibly be thought of. The salvation of soules, the glory of God, &c. Honour uses to put men upon hard and desperate services, men will runne, wrestle, fight for a crowne, though but a *corruptible crowne*. There is comfort in doing good to one, but to advance the good of many, especially of the Church of God, how honourable, how glorious is it?

All are
blessed or
curse d

1 Cor. 9. 25

Thirdly, Gods cause is a *successfull* cause, *no weapon can prosper that is formed against it, and every tongue that rises up in judgement against it shall be condemned*. The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. This Gamaliel saw, when he advised the councell of the high Priests, and Pharisees, and Rulers, to refrain from opposing the Apostles, *If this work be of men it will come to nought, but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it*, it is in vaine to fight against God. Since then the Churches cause is Gods cause, and consequently a *good* cause, a *noble* and *successful* cause, you may easily hence conclude the *happinesse* that accompanies the promoting of it. And on the contrary as easily discern, how cursed a thing it is, not only to undergo the disgrace of manning a wicked and base enterprise, but to fail of that which wicked men use to cherish themselves with, the hopes of the comfort of reward and obtaining their desires.

A success-
full cause.
Isa. 44: 17

Act. 5. 38.

Secondly, consider our *relation to the Church*. And that affords three other excellent arguments to prove men blessed or cursed, according as they help or help not the Church of God.

2 Our re-
lation to the
Church.

First, whatsoever abilities any man enjoyes, where-with he may any wayes be usefull, they are all given him to this very end, to make him serviceable to the Church. *All the manifestations of the spirit are given to profit withall*. All the gifts which Christ powred out

All our ta-
lents are gi-
ven us to
serve the
Church.
1 Cor. 12. 7

D

when

Men are
curled or
blessed.

Eph. 4. iv.
1 Pet. 4. 10

when he ascended up on high, are for the perfecting of the Saints and the building up of the body of Christ. As every one hath received a gift, so let him minister, as good stewards of the manifold graces of God. The Church is the common storehouse to which all our wealth must be carried. *Salus Ecclesie Suprema lex.* Which being so, the happinesse of every thing being the attaining of the end for which it was appointed, and the curse of it the perverting of it to a wrong end, they must needs be blessed who serve the Church, and he must needs be cursed that deprives the Church of its owne due. Solomon saith, that he that withholds corne in a time of famine, the people shall curse him, though it were his own corne, but suppose a man had the keeping of the provision of the whole towne corne, which were none of his owne, he only intrusted with the keyes of it, and should let the people starve for want of that food, which he should keepe purposely for them: or that a man had the keeping of a Magazen for an army to furnish them with what might make them victorious, and their safety and victorie hazarded, if not lost through his default, were not this man a villaine and a traitor to his countrey?

Our conjun-
ction with
the Church

Prov. 30.

37.

Rom. 9. 3, 3

Secondly, Consider how neare the relation is betwixt the Church and us, (except we be of the malignant Church, of the Dragons armie, and then no more need be said to prove men cursed.) the Church is our Mother, and all the Saints are our Brethren, a relation which all lawes of God and man do fasten dutie upon. The eye that mocketh at his father or despiseth to obey his mother, the Ravens of the vally shall pick it out, and the young Eagles shall eat it. Paul thought he did no more than his dutie when he had great heavines and continuall sorrow.

sorrow in his heart, and could wish himselfe accursed from Christ for his Brethren his kinsmen, who were Israelites.

as they help
or hel p not
the Church
of God.

Thirdly, All our owne blessednesse stands or falls with the blessednesse of the Church. The Church is such a corporation or mysticall body, as hath in it all the properties of a naturall body wherein no members can be happy in an abstracted sense, but as parts conjoyned with the whole: because every part hath besides the neare relation to the whole, a subsistency in it, which is the foundation of any other good it receives. And so consequently, the good or gaine of the whole is the gaine of every member, and whatsoever tends to the dissolution of the whole, cannot but bee destructive to all the parts. As when a company of Merchants have but one joyned stocke, every penny gained or lost is gaine or losse to them all. Or as it is with a company of passengers in the same Ship, save the vessell and you save all, sink the Ship, and every mans Cabbin is cast away. Now this is a more prevailing argument than reason can make, it is grounded in nature which must prevaile with all; Nature makes heavie things to ascend, rather than the whole should be endangered by a vacuum. Nature teaches the tongue to cry out, when the toe is trod upon, the hand to work, that the belly starve not, the feet to run, that the back be not cold. Every man finds this in the naturall body; and Gods Spirit dwelling in all the Saints workes the same spirituall disposition in them that are partakers of the divine nature, *That there be no schisme or division in the body of Christ, but that all the members may have the same care one for another, That whether one member suffer, all the members should suffer with it, or one member be honoured, all the members should rejoyce with it.*

Our Stand-
ing and fal-
ling with
the church.
Rom. 12.4
1 Cor. 12.
12.

1 Cor. 12.
25, 26.

Men are
cursed or
blessed

that is
the way
to the
Church

Application

For re-
prooffe to
them who
help a-
gainst
the church.

By this time I hope it is cleare, that if we look upon Gods promises or threatnings, mens experience in all ages, or the Churches interest in God, his neare union with it, his affection to it, his owning the Churches cause, or if we consider our own engagements to the Church, our neare conjunction with it, and under God the dependance of all our comforts and welfare upon it, we may and must conclude, that all men are blessed or cursed according as they help or help not the church of God.

The rest of the time I shall spend in the Application of it, that what is thus cleare to your judgement and conscience, may by Gods blessing take due place in your hearts and conversations. And there are but two collections which I shall make for use. The first, briefly for *terroure* and *reprooffe*, the second more largely, for *exhortation* and *duty*.

First, for reprooffe. This speaks very sadly against two sorts of people whereof (God knowes) there are many hundreds of thousands who yet professe themselves to be Christians. As first, Are all they cursed that doe not thus helpe the Lord against the mighty? what then are they, who instead of *helping the Lord against the mighty*, do help *the mighty against the Lord*? who instead of joyning all their strength, and giving all their assistance to the Church in her distresse, doe give all the assistance they can to the enemies of the Church, that they may do mischief against the Church? What shall we thinke of these men? How many are there who have as it were entred their names into the *Dragons muster-book*, openly bidding defiance against the Church of Christ, in every good cause? who walke *Antipodes* against the cause of God, like *Antiochus*, making war against the Saints, like the little horne in

Daniel

Daniel, wearing out the Saints of the most high in all places where they can prevail? how many others, like the Kings and Princes in the 2. Psal. Set themselves, and take counsell against the Lord and against his Anointed, digging as deep as hell for counsell to do all the mischief they can to the servants of the Lord Iesus Christ? How many others with Balaam, doe what in them lies to curle them for reward, who for very malice raile upon and revile the children of the most High? How many others, with Edom, look upon the affliction of Israel, rejoycing over them in the day of their destruction, speaking proudly in the day of their distresse, crying out against Ierusalem, down with it, downe with it even to the ground. How many others, with Amalek, smite the hindmost of Gods Church, all who are weake and feeble, when they are faint and wearie, adding sorrowes and increasing the burthen of the afflicted? How many, with Sannballat and Tobiah, are grieved when any are found to doe good in Israel, endeavouring to hinder the building of Sion, and to further the repairing of the walls of Babylon? God knowes there are too many such, I hope not many such present here this day before the Lord. But concerning these, if there should be any such here by what name or title shall I call them? The Gyants who make war against heaven, *θεῖοι μάχοι*, fighters against God, I know no appellation fitter for them. But whatsoever they delight to be called, I most earnestly beseech them in their most secret thoughts to answer these few questions. By what injurie hath the Lord provoked thee thus against him? what iniquitie hast thou found in him? what hurt hath Christ done to thee? what evils are his righteous servants guilty of against thee? Or if thou canst give no reason of

as they help
or help not
the Church
of God.

Psal. 137.
Deut. 25:17

Allare cur-
led or blef-
sed

Zeeh. 14.
12.

Isa. 27. 4.
Isa. 45. 9.

2. To them
who stand
Neuters.

2 King. 17.
33. 34. 41.

this, but only, *non amo te, nec possum dicere quare*. I know no reason, but my heart stands against them. What *honor* or *reward* dost thou expect for this desperate service? What hope hast thou of speeding? Canst thou make thy forces strong enough to carry the day? O friend though thou beest *proud* and *dareing*, yet be not *mad*, no weapon will prosper which is formed against them. God hath sworn it against all the people who fight against *Ierusalem*, that *their flesh shall consume whilest they stand upon their feet, their eyes shall rot in their holes, their tongue shall consume away in their mouth*. O set not *Briars* and *thornes* to fight against devouring fire. Let the *potsheards* strive with the *Potsheards* of the earth, but let not a poor worm fight against his maker. Thou art too weake to strive with God. Kicke not against these prickles, *abstaine, abstaine from those men* of whom the Lord hath said, *he that touches them, touches the apple of mine eye*.

Secondly, There are others (not open enemies professing to take part against the Church) who stand as *neuters*, who stand aloofe of, shewing themselves neither open enemies nor true friends, like the *Samaritans*, who feared the Lord and served their idols, of whom also *Iosephus* saith, that when the *Iewes* were in prosperitie the *Samaritans* were their friends, but were ever severed from them in their adverfitie. But as the Lord said of them when they feared the Lord and served their idols, *they feared not the Lord*: so he will one day say of these they love not the Lord. They say such as stand *neuters* are ordinarily crushed, which side soever wins, but the Lord acknowledges no *Neuters*. This text *curfes* all them who *come not out to helpe* him, as well as those who *come to fight* against him,
And

And our Saviour at the last day will as well denounce *as they help*
go ye oursed against them, who *gave them not bread* *or help not*
 when they were hungry, as them who *plucked their* *Gods Chu.*
bread away from them. And in this case it is a certaine
 rule, for it is Christs rule, *he that is not with me, is a-*
gainst me. And of these neuters there are two sorts.
 First, Some stand neuters out of *policie*, because they *Mat. 12. 30.*
 will see which side shall prevaile, that they may bee *Of which*
 sure to joyne with the winning side, of these we have *two sorts.*
 a notable example *Judg. 8.* when *Gideon* was pursuing *Some out*
Zeba and Zalmunnah the Kings of Midian, hee calls to *of policie.*
 the men of *Succoth*, and the men of *Penuel* to helpe to *Judg. 8. 4, 5.*
 victuall his armie, *Give I pray you loaves to them that*
follow me, for they are faint. But they would first see
 what would be the event of the warre, *Are the heads of*
Zeba and Zalmunnah in thine hands, that we should
give bread unto thine army? as who should say, if you *Verse 6*
 have gotten the day we are for you, if not, you must
 pardon us, we will look on a while longer; and even
 so do many falsehearted friends deal with the Church
 of God, turn *Jewes* when they have an honoured *Mor-*
decai, and as ready to cut their throats when *Haman*
 prevailes against them. They will be sure to be of the
 winning side that they may save their owne stake.
 but what *Gideons* answer was to the men of *Succoth*
 and *Penuel*, *when the Lord hath delivered Zeba and Zal-* *Verse 6, 7*
munnah into mine hand, then will I teare your flesh with *16, 17.*
briars and thornes of the wildernesse, then will I beate down
your Towers, and slay the men of your Citie, and accor-
 dingly did it: such like doome and execution shall all
 politicke neuters receive from the hand of Christ.

2 There is a second sort of Neuters who neither
 oppose the Church nor helpe it, not out of pollicie:
 but

2. Out of
 slothfull
 full careles-
 sic

All are cur-
led or blef-
sed

Act. 18. 14.

Prov. 14. 10.
Jud. 21. 9.

Verf. 10.
2 For Ex-
hortation.

but meere fluggishneffe and desire of ease or basenes of spirit: loving only their worldly profits and sensu-
all pleasures, nothing regarding what concerns reli-
gion, or the Church: like *Gallio* the Deputie of *A-*
chaia, who when the *Iewes*, one while beat *Paul*, ano-
ther while the Ruler of the Synagogue (as the Text
sayes) cared for none of these things. If it had beene a
matter of *right or equitie*, things belonging to the *Ro-*
man lawes, he was ready to appeare, but if it be a *mat-*
ter of Religion, it was out of his element, he is indiffe-
rent, whether the Beare bite the Dog, or the Dog bite
the Beare, it is all one to him. Abundance of these are
to be found every where, of whom we may say, as *Sal-*
omon in another case, *The heart knowes his owne bitter-*
nesse, &c. They neither know the Churches bitter-
nesse, nor are acquainted with the joy of it. Such (I
thinke) were the men of *Iabesh Gilead*, who when all
the Tribes of Israel had bound themselves by oath to
prosecute that bloody murder of the *Levites* Concu-
bine, against the *Benjamites*, and never to returne untill
they had avenged it, they let both sides alone, they
had businesse enough of their owne at home, not
doubting but there were men enough to do the work,
though they kept themselves quiet. But this neutrality
of theirs cost them deare in the end, their owne heart
blood paid for it: and it is most probable, that *Meroz*
in this Text was guilty of no other fault. The Lord
grant that they may be warnings to us, that we bee not
made warnings to others. I hope this may suffice for
reprooffe.

The second Use, and that which I most aime at, is
for exhortation. Oh that I were able to speake some-
what to raise up your spirits, to make you these blef-
sed

sed men who willingly helpe the Lord against the mightie: I confesse the *day*, the *occasion* of our meeting, this *Text*, and your *place* and office. (Right Honourable and beloved) give me an infinite advantage to speake, if I were able to improve all for your good. The thing I aime at, is, to send you home with *Luthers* resolution, who protested to God, that no portion, which God could give him in this world should content him but onely this, to bee Gods Servant, to bee a *usefull* man in his Church, he would care neither for silver nor gold, neither for honour nor reproach: ease and labour should bee all one, so that hee might bee accepted and usefull. And would the Lord vouchsafe to make my labour effectuall with you in this thing, I should bee a blessed man in my worke, and you should goe home the blessedest company that ever met in such an Assemblie. To this end I shall endeavour two things,

All are
blessed or
curled

To give our
selves up to
the service
of the Char-

First, to give you *motives* or incentives to inflame your hearts after such a temper of spirit, that you may be willing to give up your selves to the help of the Lord and his Church.

Motives
thereunto.

Secondly, some *directions* to enable you in truth and realitie to be usefull. And although most of the things that I shall speake doe chiefly concern you, our honourable Worthies, yet they will in their proportion reach the meanest in the congregation.

To stir you up, consider these three motives.

First, the honour of God. Certainly the highest end of our living in this world, is to honour God. Hallowed be thy name, is the first petition of every one that saith the Lords Prayer. Now a man

1 From
Gods hon-
our.

E

never

Men are
curled or
blessed.

never gives glory to God as God, never sets up God in his right place, till he have devoted himself wholly and absolutely to serve him in what is most acceptable with him. And I have made it apparent that the Church of Christ is that field from which he expects the most plentiful crop of glory, and and therefore would have the most cost bestowed on it; He gets glory by all our actions, but in what wee doe for the Church, wee give him glory and that in the highest degree.

3 From our
relation to
the Church
and the
churches
gaine.

Secondly, as for *Gods* sake, so for the *Churches* sake. It is ever well with the Church, when the members of it, doe preferre the Churches good above their owne. *Politicians* and *Historians* observe this of States and Empires, that they usually thrive when the Subjects are *Common wealths men*, every one endeavouring to promote the *publick* good. *Livie* observes this of *Rome*, that so long as men would leave their trades, farmes and merchandise, Ladies part with their Jewels and ornaments, rather than any detriment should come to the Citie, all Nations were subdued to them: But when they grew *private wealths men*, every one labouring to preserve and adorn his owne Cabbin only; the ship presently was endangered and went to decay. This is as true of the Church. In all the rising times of it, God hath ever stirred up such noble and generous spirits, who have given themselves to the Lord, and the service of the Church. In the *Acts* of the *Apostles* you shall find that they were all of one heart and one mind. No man said that ought of the things that he possessed was his own, they had all things common. Sold their possessions and goods, distributing them as every man had need, and lived so, as if

one

Cap. 2, 44,
6, 43

one soule possessed them all: This was the thriving time of the Church. Then their multitude increased by thousands and ten thousands and walking in the feare of the Lord, and the comfort of the Holy Ghost were multiplied. But when once men grew to seeke their *owne things*, and not *the things of Iesus Christ*, and his Church, the Church soone fell into a languishing condition. As therefore you desire to keepe up the spirits and strength of the Church, so labour to keepe up your own spirits for the Church, as you desire that may not faint, so doe you take heed of fainting in the service of it.

as they help
or hel p not
the Church
of God.

As, 9.3.

Thirdly, as for Gods sake, and the Churches sake, so for your owne sake, for your owne comfort and benefit, and that in many respects. As first, Such a frame of Spirit as this will bee the best evidence of your owne safe condition, of your peace with God; tis a comfortable thing for a man to hate his lusts, to strive against them, to waite upon duties, to attend upon Ordinances, to bee often enquiring, *What shall I doe to bee saved?* but all this may bee but selfe love (although such a love God approves of) but when the soule comes to enquire, what shall I doe that Christ may bee glorified, that his Church may bee edified? to know no crosse but the Churches crosse? to preferre the joy of the Church before all his owne peace and wellfare? this is not only an Argument of a man looking to Heaven-ward, but one that hath proceeded farre in the way; A Scholler of the first and highest forme; and this is that which Saint Iohn meanes, when hee doth so frequently hang all our evidence to Heaven, upon Love of the

3 From our
owne goods
both

In our in-
ward peace

Men are
curled or
blessed

1. Joh. 3. 14

Verf. 10.

1. Joh. 3. 14
V. 16. 17

Isa. 38. 3

1. Joh. 3. 14
V. 16. 17

Neh. 13. 14

brethren, Hereby wee know that wee are translated from death to life, because wee Love the Brethren. In this are the Children of God manifest from the children of the Divell: Hee that loves not his brother, is not of God: Hereby wee know that wee are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. Every one that loves God, loves him also that is begotten of him. And many other expressions, as if Saint John knew no other evidence but Love; now what Love is it? Hee meanes it not of an inward affection only, to wish well to them, and so forth, but by love to serve our brethren, to lay out our selves, our lives, and parts, and all to serve them, To lay downe our lives for the Brethren, as Christ laid downe his life for us. This was, that that bore up Hezekiahs heart in the time of his sickness, when hee could pleade, Lord, remember that I have done that which is good in thy sight. What was the good that Hezekiah had done? even this, Hee had set himselfe to purge Religion, to setup Gods Ordinances, to make the Church prosper, given up himselfe to the publick service of the Church of God, This made Nehemiah comfortably to goe to God; Oh my God, wipe not out the good deeds, that I have done for the House of my God, And indeed, there neither is nor can be, any more certaine or infallible signe of a living member of Christs body, and of our communion with Jesus Christ in his holy Spirit, that Spirit which dwels and acts in his whole mysticall body, then this, to sympathize with the Church, to suffer in the sufferings of it, to rejoyce in the consolations of it and to preferre the good of it, before that of
our

our owne soules : Secondly, the honour of it may provoke you. Ingenuous and Noble Spirits will doe more for their honour than for their gaine, now if you waigh it in the Ballance of the Sanctuary, you shall finde, that to bee a publick servant of the Church, to have an influence into the wellfare of many, is the greatest honour which God communicates to any Creature; The Creatures which are for publick and universall use, are most noble and excellent, the World might stand well enough without Pearles and Jewels, and a thousand such like things, but the fire, the water, the Sunne, the Earth, which are servants to all, the World were ruined without them. Yea this will make us like to the Angels, the excellentest of all Gods creatures, whose delightful employment is to bee *Ministring Spirits*, sent forth to *Minister for them*, who shall bee heires of salvation. What shall I say, this makes us (more than any thing else) like unto God himselfe, *thou art good and doest good* : almost all the knowledge which we have of the glory of God, comes from the good which God diffuseth into the Creature, and they partake most of Gods nature, and most eminently beare his Image, who are his most usefull instruments in doing good to his Church and people; and if we marke it, wee shall seldome finde the Holy Ghost in the Scripture, to point out any as truly honourable, but under this notion, that they study the wellfare and good of Sion. Marke them whom Saint *Paul* commends in the twelfth to the *Romans*, and yee shall see this is the matter of their praise; *Phaeb was a servant of*

as they help
or help not
the Church
of God.

And our
honour be-
fore God
and men.
Heb. 1. 14.

Allare cur-
ted or blif-
ful

run bnf
ed unad
boD 201
am bnf
pt 1. d. 1

1 Cor. 6. 15

2 Cor. 8. 23

the Church at Cenchrea, shee was a favourer of many: Aquila and Priscilla were Pauls helpers, ready to lay downe their neckes for a publiek good. Mary, Andronicus, Urban, Triphena, Triphosa, and many other, this is their commendation, They laboured much in the Lord. So the household of Stephanus, Paul would have all of them subject to the household of Stephanus, he would have them numbered among the Patricii. What was the household of Stephanus? It may bee some honest Tradesman in his Civill ranke: but here is the Crowne: They addicted themselves to the service of the Saints: and of the messengers of the Churches, some good men that came on the Churches errand, the Apostle saith, if any inquired what they were, what ranck or qualitie they were of, hee answers, they were *The Messengers of the Churches, the glory of Christ.* Yea Saint Paul of himselfe, who seldome gloryed of himselfe, who though hee were the greatest Apostle, esteemed himselfe the greatest sinner, yet could not forbear glorying in this, *That hee laboured more abundantly than any others, that the Care of all the Churches lay upon him, that hee became all things to all men, that hee might save some, and the Stigmata, the brands or marks that hee bore about his body for his service in the Church, hee did more glory in, than any Noble man can of his George or Blew Ribband: You shall see it, Galathians 6. verse 17.* The Galathians had used Saint Paul somewhat courselly, judged his actions and intentions, and marke how Saint Paul seemes to take state upon him, *from henceforth let no man trouble mee;*

What

What made him thus high in his Spirit? *I beare in my body, the Stigmata, the markes of the Lord Iesus:* as they help or help not Gods Chu. this was a badge of his honour, and therefore they must use him honourably, and indeed if wee compare the honour and glory that rests upon men for the service of Christ and his Church, and that which vaine men seeke in other things, the truth of this would easily bee seene. Suppose one man could say, this wound I received in fighting for a *Mistris* in a Duell: Another thus, my state is empaiied in brangling suites at Law, Another in gameing and Whoreing. What fruit? what glory is in these things? but now on the other side, when a servant of God can say, *Hæc manus ob Ecclesiam pugnando, &c.* these offices I lost, this preferment I went without, thus was I scorned, thus is my body wasted for Christs sake and for his Churches sake; this is glory indeed, this glory exceeds the happinesse of mortalitie, and will outlive all wealth and pleasure. And all experience shewes us, that however such men are most opposed and scorned by the enemies of the Church, who alwayes most fight against the Captaines and Leaders, yet among the Saints these are the most precious men, one of them esteemed worth a thousand of others: and this some thinke Saint Paul to aime at in the fifth to the *Romans*, when he saith, *scarcely for a righteous man will one dye, yet peradventure for a good man, that is, a usefull Man, a serviceable Man, a Man whose life and labours benefits many, Some would even dare to die.* Thirdly, nor is the Reward lesse, at the present it may bee such instruments.

v.7.
Thirdly in
the great-
nesse of our
reward.
Mat. 19. 29.

All are cur-
red or ble-
sed

ments may loose Houses, or brethren, or children, or lands, and their owne lives; but they shall finde it againe, in this life a hundred fold besides the inheritance of everlasting life. Bread cast upon these waters is seed sown in fertile ground; the bosome of the Church is the most fruitfull soile in the world. Flesh and blood will never believe this, but Jesus Christ the Lord of Life and Glory, whose all the Silver and Gold in the World is, who hath power enough to promote his servants and favourites, hath sufficiently assured us of this in his Gospell; Men will securely adventure their estates upon Ropes and Cables in the deepe Seas, when the ensuring office is ingaged for their securitie; if yee dare trust the insluring office of Heaven, goe on, serve the Church, I promise in the Name of Christ to you, yee shall bee paid every penny, every houres sleepe which yee have broken, every gray haire which is hereby scattered upon your head, every disease which yee have contracted, every reproach which you have suffered, ye shall loose nothing by all or any of these, he will repay it you in this world an hundred fold in better things, it may be with trouble and persecution, but in the world to come ye shall have life everlasting; Thus farre the motives, which would the Lord let sinke into your hearts: how would yee with Paul rejoyce to be offered up a Sacrifice for the Church of Christ? how willingly would yee continue to spend, and to bee spent in so good a worke?

Secondly, some directions how we may be able to doe this: where

First,

First, I shall shew what is requisite to prepare us and fit us to be the Churches servants. Secondly, how and wherein, they that are fit should help the Church.

as they help
or help not
the Church
of God.

First, men must bee fitted for it; this *Mercury* is not made of every wood; the Lord needs no Instruments; if hee use any, it is *propter munificentiam*, not *propter indigentiam*; because hee meanes to honour them, not because they can benefit him: and therefore hee will make them choice spirits, rare and singular men, to whom hee will thus communicate his own glory, and three things must meet in them. First, They must be godly; a Generall in an Army, neither gives pay nor command to any, untill they bee duly entred into his muster-book: Now men are never numbred among the Lambs followers, their names are not entred into his List, untill they be Saints. Read *Revelation*, where ever the Lambs followers are described, *They are such as have washed their Robes, made them white in the blood of the Lamb, serving him night and day; they are redeemed from the earth; in their mouth is found no guile. They that are with the Lamb are called and chosen and faithfull.* And it must needs be so; for so long as men are in their unregenerate condition, they are Satans vassals in the maine; there is not in them a *substratum* of reall usefulnessse to the Church; their heart cannot be with the Lord nor his people: 'Tis only the new life which is the right principle of this service which is here expected: If therefore the Lord have kindled in any of your hearts a desire to doe him service; I beseech

Meanes to
make us use-
full.

The persons
must be

First Godly.

Rev 7. 14.

14. 4.

F

All are cū-
fed or blef-
fed as they

befeech you, first, humble your souls deeply before God for your finnes; get your Robes washed in the blood of the Lamb, rest not till the Spirit of Christ come to dwell in you, and when yee have, once with the *Thessalonians*, given your selves first to the Lord, then yee are fit to give your selves to the Church for the Lords sake.

2. Deniers
of them-
selves,

Luke 14.26.

2. Tim. 2.4.

Secondly, as they must be *godly*, who would be servants to the Church; so they must learn to *deny themselves*; they must be taken off from all private selfe-engagements; they must set light by their own ease, their own profit, and their own life: *If any man* (saith Christ) *come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot bee my Disciple.* Search through all the Scriptures, you shall hardly finde a man who ever was fitted to bee usefull in the Church, till he had set himselfe aside; *No man that warreth, entangleth himselfe with the affaires of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a souldier.* And therefore it was the *A, B, C,* which Christ taught all his followers, even this lesson of *selfe-deniall*: You shall read *Mat. 20. v. 22.* That when the mother of *James* and *Iohn* came to seek preferment at Christs hand for her two sonnes, that the one might sit at his *right* hand, and the other at his *left* in his Kingdome; Christ presently nips that motion in the head, and tells them, that instead of expecting such high and pleasant things in this world, they must (if they meant to be his Apostles) prepare to *drink of his cup, and to be baptized with his baptisme*; that is, take paines and suffer trouble.

And

And verily sad experience hath taught this, that men are never cordiall to the Church of Christ, who embrace this present world. It is recorded of the King of Navarre then a Protestant, being pressed by Beza, to appeare more in the cause of God, and to owne religion to the purpose: He makes him answer to this effect, That he was their friend, but hee resolved to put no further to Sea, than that he might get to shore if a storme should rise; he resolved not to hazzard his hopes of the Crown of France, and you know what became of him. So when men will make religion as twelve, and the world as thirteen, they will in sad tryals, with Demas, forsake the cause and servants of God, and embrace the present world: Like those Potters recorded in the first of the Chro. who dwelt among plants and hedges: There they dwelt with the King for his work. A brand which the holy Ghost sets upon them, who when Cyrus proclaimed liberty and encouragement to returne to Ierusalem, to rebuild the Temple and set up the worship of God, refused to goe back with their brethren, and chose rather to dwell among plants and hedges, than to hazzard a gainefull trade, which they made of the Kings work. O beloved, take heed of these choaking thornes; the riches, cares, and pleasures of this world; especially beware of the world, when it comes with flattering allurements: Many ships have been swallowed in a calme, when they have out-rid severall stormes. Troubles and persecutions, (like the winde in Plutarchs Parable) make men gird their cloak (their profession of religion and service to the cause of God) closer to them, when the

as they help
or help not
Gods Chur.

2 Tim: 4 23.

Men are cur-
sed or blef-
sed

warne Sunne-shine of preferments steales it from them :

Rebus in adversis facile est contemnere vitam.

There is a notable story of a souldier of *Antigonus*, one whom the Prince observed to be a very valiant man, ready to adventure upon any desperate service, and therefore much favoured him; and observing that he still looked pale and lean, would needs know what he ayled, and finding that he had a secret and dangerous disease, he caused all possible meanes to be used for his recovery; which when it was accomplished, the Prince observed him to be lesse forward in service than formerly, and demanding the reason, he ingenuously acknowledged that now he felt the sweetnesse of life, and was loth to lose it. And thus doe many thousands, who with *Ionathan* when they come into a wood that drops with honey, leave the chase of Gods enemies, and feed upon the sweetnesse of worldly advancement. But, O yee Worthies, fly all these things; with *Paul*, esteem your lives not deare to you: Let no earthly thing move you, so you may finish your course and service appointed you from and for the Lord *Iesus Christ*: and conclude with *Esther*, if I perish, I perish.

Act 20. 24

3. They must
love the
Church.

Thirdly, whosoever would bee a reall usefull instrument for the good of the Church, must get an *unfained love* to the Church planted in his heart, that it may beare fruit in his life and actions. All we do is nothing but *our labour of love*. Love will force more than the strappado, draw more than a yoke of oxen;

oxen ; It is a sweet and strong tyrant. When the
 Apostle *Paul* had pressed the *Corinthians* earnestly
 to study for the best gifts to make them usefull in
 the Church : and to this purpose gives them a cata-
 logue of the severall gifts and graces which Christ,
 for this end, had shed abroad, when hee ascended up
 on high : Yet in the last verse of that chapter hee
 promiseth to *shew them a more excellent way*, and that
 is the way of *love*, which he layes downe in the thir-
 teenth chapter : which will *doe* all things, *endure* all
 things, without which if men had the tongues of
 men and Angels, all other gifts of prophesie, know-
 ledge, &c. *they are but as sounding brasse, or tinckling*
cymbals. This is the reason why Saint *Iohn* through-
 out all his Epistles calls for almost nothing but
 love ; because in that he calls for all. *My little chil-*
dren, love one another. And this is also the reason
 why the Devil doth so infinitely labour to sow the
 tares of division in the field of the Church ; hee
 knowes if he can break the *bond of love*, he breaks the
bond of perfection, and opens the *flood-gates* to confu-
 sion. Rest not therefore, who ever thou art that de-
 sirest to do good in the Church, till the love of it be
 fixed in thy breast, as deeply as the love of the *Ark*
 was in the heart of the wife of *Phineas*, who died
 for griefe when the Arke of God was taken : Or as
Calice is said to have been in Queen *Maries*, who
 affirmed, that if her body were opened *Calice* would bee
 found in her heart. To this end, consider often how
 deare the Church is to thy deare Redeemer ; how
 comely and beautifull it is in it self ; *comely as the cur-*
tains of Solomon, even when it is *black as the tents of*

as they help
 or help not
 the Church
 of God.

1 Cor. 12.
 27, 28.

All are cur-
ted or blef-
sed

Kedar with persecution : How deformed, unclean, and every way vain *all other societies* are in comparison of *this* ; As the *Lilly* among the thorns ; How near to thy selfe ; begotten of the same seed, laid in the same womb with thee, and thou also wert laid in its womb, and sucked its breasts ; redeemed with the same blood, enjoyest all the same priviledges, hast all thy welfare in this world wrapt up in its welfare, and expectest to live with it to all eternity in the same glory. These thoughts rightly working upon thy heart, would make thee willingly spend and bee spent for the Churches good : thy services would not be as the motion of a stone cast out of a sling, at first swift by virtue of a violent impression ; but constant, and strongest rather toward the latter end, as those motions are said to be which proceed from a naturall inward principle. So then you easily apprehend the excellent use, and indeed the necessity of the concurrence of these three qualifications of godlinesse, *self-deniall*, and *love*, to the making up of a good Church-man : the Lord make them evident in all your hearts and wayes.

What these
friends of
the Church
must doe.

Next followes, What men thus accomplished may and must doe for the Church. The service required may be reduced to these two heads :

First, somewhat to prepare us for action.

Secondly, To act as we are prepared.

By way of preparation three things are requisite.

1 By way of
preparation,
they must

First, carefully to *informe* our selves of the state and condition in which the Church is ; otherwise wee deprive our selves of all possibility of being helpful to it. Bee a man never so willing, and never so
able

able to relieve the distresses of his brethren, hee can
neither heal the sick, nor help the poor, unlesse hee
knew who and where they were that needed, and
what helpe they wanted. This made *Nehemiah* so
diligently to enquire concerning *Ierusalem*, and his
brethren which were left of the captivity. This made
Daniel search into *Ieremiahs* Prophecies, to know
the condition of the Church, and learn his own duty.

help or help
not Gods
Church.

1 know the
wants of the
Church.
Neh. 1. 2.

Dan 9.

2. This enquiry must not be out of Athenian cu-
riosity, as most people enquire after newes; but so to
know, as to work our hearts to a fellowfeeling of
their condition, otherwise all our intelligence will
be as dry clouds, flying over our heads without a
drop of raine. Thus did *Nehemiah* as soone as hee
understood that his brethren were in great affliction
and reproach, the wall of *Ierusalem* broken downe, and
the gates thereof burnt with fire, he sate down and wept:
this prepared him for the good service he did after-
ward. Thus also did *Daniel*, who when God had
shewed him, though but in a vision, the calamities
that were to come upon the Church of the Jewes
by *Antiochus Epiphanes*, he fainted, and was sick certain
dayes. And the want of this fellowfeeling is both
taxed and threatned by God in *Amos 6*. No man is
sorry for the affliction of *Ioseph*. God esteeming it an
argument of little love to sit downe with *Ha-
man* at a banquet, when the City of *Shushan* is in
perplexity.

2 Sympa-
thize with
them.

Neh. 1. 4.

Dan. 8. 27.

3. As wee must know and bee affected with the
Churches want, so we must enquire what is in our
power to do for it, wherein we may be helpfull. This
I shall have occasion to speak of afterward.

3 They must
enquire
what is in
their hand
to help.

The.

All are cur-
sed or blef-
sed

2 By way of
action, they
must

The second sort of directions are for action. And these may be brought to two heads.

First, somewhat we must do immediately *to God for the Church.*

Secondly, somewhat we must doe *for the Church from God.*

1. Pr. y for it.

First, that which wee are to doe to God for the Church is to pray for it. I name this *first*, because it is the first and chiefest service that we can perform. If any other talent bee a penny, Prayer is a pound. This is the talent of all talents: concerning which I shall speak a little more fully, as the seasonableness of it requires.

Jonah 1.6

First it must be granted, that all the friends of the Church *may help it* with their prayers: if with *Peter* they have no silver nor gold, but will give such as they have, they may afford a subsidy of prayer. They have all the spirit of adoption, enabling them to cry, *Abba, Father*: So that what the Master of the ship said to *Jonah*, *what meanest thou, O sleeper? arise and call upon thy God*: (though he could neither sit at sterne, nor handle the tacklings, yet he might pray;) may be said to any man in regard of the Church; though thou canst neither runne, nor ride, nor write, nor fight, yet thou canst pray: Awake, awake. And as plaine it is, that *God requires* it should bee so. O pray for the peace of *Ierusalem*. You that make mention of the Lord keep not silence: give him no rest, till hee establish and make *Ierusalem* the praise of the earth. You that have escaped the sword remember the Lord afar off, and let *Ierusalem* come into your minde. But the chiefe thing I aime at is, to discover the power of

Psal. 122.6

Isa. 62.6,7

Ier. 51.50.

Prayer:

Prayer. Which I shall never bee able fully to expresse: None can tell what *Prayer* can do, but he that can tell what *God* can do. Yet these few conclusions may give some light toward it.

as they help
or help not
the Church
of God.

What great
things Prayer
is able to
doe.

First, *God hath not promised to do any thing without it.* It is confest, he doth many things without Prayer, but he hath not promised to do any thing for his Church without it. *All this will I doe,* (saith the Lord) *but for all these things will I be enquired by the house of Israel.* Secondly, As he hath promised to do nothing without, so he will do all things by it: *I will visit you* (saith God) *and performe my good word toward you;* but you must performe your good work towards me: *Then shall ye call upon me, and you shall goe and pray unto me. Aske and you shall receive: this is the confidence that we have, that whatsoever we aske according to his will, we know that we have the petitions that we desire of him.* What cannot Prayer doe? It is able to overthrow all enemies: *When I pray, mine enemies shall turn back.* An hundred eighty five thousand were overthrowne in one night, after the Prayer of *Hezekiah*. It is able to turne away all plagues, pestilence, famine, sword, wild-beasts; whatsoever plague or sicknesse there be, prayer and supplication will heal all. It is able to bring downe all mercies; it is the key of heaven: *Eliab*, a man subject to the same infirmities with us, hee prayed, and the heaven was shut; he prayed again, and the heaven was opened. It is the most efficacious engine in the world; it opened the prison doores, and the iron gate, to set *Peter* at liberty. It is the summe of all wisdom, strength, and policy. What should I say

Ezek 36-37.

Ier. 29. 10. 12.

1 Ioh. 14. 15.

Psal. 36.

Isa. 37. 36.

1 Kin. 8. 37.

39.

G

more?

All are cur-
sed or blef-
sed

Gen. 3. 26.
& H. 1. 2. 4.

Exod. 32. 10.

Cap. 45. v. 10.

Quest.

Answ.

And the rea-
sons of it.

Rom. 8. 26.

more? It prevails over God himself. *Jacob wrestled with God, and prevailed: What was his wrestling? What was the strength, whereby, as a Prince, he had power with God? Even this, he wept, and made supplication to him.* It will not onely stop the Sun in his course, as *Ioshua did; Sun stand thou still in Gibeon, and thou Moon in the valley of Ajalon;* but (with reverence be it spoken) it holds that hand which rules heaven and earth. Let mee alone, said God to *Moses, that I may destroy them: Moses prayer hindered God from doing what hee seemed resolved to doe. He said he would have destroyed them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the gap, to turne away his wrathfull indignation.* And thus some interpret that place of the Prophet *Isaiah, Aske mee of things to come, concerning my Sonnes; and as concerning the works of my hands command me:* as if God had made over his owne omnipotency to Prayer.

But whence is it that Prayer becomes thus efficacious? What is there in the submissions and supplications of poor worms to work such wonders?

I answer, These foure things meet in prayer, which are the strength of it, and may be your satisfaction. First, The persons who pray are Gods owne children, dearer to him than heaven and earth, tender as the apple of his owne eye: and we who are parents know how prevalent the cryes of our own children are, *we being evill can give good things to our children.* Secondly, Gods owne Spirit dictates and endites their prayers for them: *We know not what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit it selfe makes intercession for us.* Now as it is said of the Sonne, *I know thou hearest me alwayes;*

alwayes ; so may it be said of the Spirit. What regard ^{as they help or help not Gods Chor.} soever he may beare to *us* poore sinners, he will certainly regard the intercessions of his owne Spirit.

Thirdly, The Prayers of Gods people they are offered up and presented to God by *his owne Sonne*, our Lord Jesus Christ, *the high Priest of our profession, the Angel of his presence, who is at the right hand of God, who dayly makes intercession for us*, as the Spirit makes intercession in us, and mingles his incense, with the ^{Rev. 8.3.} prayers of the Saints, upon the golden altar which is before the throne. Fourthly, There is this in prayer,

that it gives the greatest glory unto God. Of all gifts or graces which God hath given to any creature, never any thing (except faith onely) was found to give that glory to God which prayer doth : especially in these two things. First, it brings God into the field to fight the battell for them, makes him to work all their works for them ; as indeed he doth. Whatsoever a man prayes for, he doth by interpretation say, Lord, I never shall have this, unlesse thou give it me ; I never shall do this, unlesse thou doe it for me. And that is the reason why in 2 Chron. 20. after Hezekiah and his people had prayed, and professed they had no strength of their owne, left the worke onely and wholly upon Gods hand. Then God tells them, *The battell is not yours but Gods* ; Now you have put it into my hands, you shall see what I will doe for you. And secondly, When the work is done it ascribes the praise and glory of all to him, to whom alone it is due. If we mark it, God hath little glory in the world for those good things which men receive without Prayer ; their friends, parts, wit, industry,

Men are cur-
sed or blef-
sed

must share with God; but what is *won* by Prayer is *worn* with thankfulness; there being a naturall relation betwixt *praying* and *praising*, as the rivers returne by the sea from whence they come.

Application
of it.

Shewing, by
way of in-
struction,

1. Whence
all our pre-
sent mercies
and delive-
rances come

O that I were able to teach you the right use of this engine. And first let mee speake to you (right Honourable and Beloved) the Lords and Commons assembled in this Parliament: Give mee leave to shew you the true spring of all that good, which hath come through your hands, since your happy entrance upon your great work. God knows I would not eclipse your worth nor due praise: We rejoyce in you, and blesse God for you; wee have received great mercies by your means: but are you the causes of them? Have they been done by your wisdom and forecast, or for any worthinesse found in your selves? Hath not God done them all almost by contraries? Have not you been many times at a losse, even at your wits end? Hath not God marvellously discovered wicked enterprises against you, and almost miraculously preserved you by his own naked arme, ever since the beginning of your meeting? Give therefore the glory where it is due, you shall have the honour of excellent instruments, but this honour is too high for you. Know therefore, Beloved, (and it will increase your honour to acknowledge it) that Prayer, and God by Prayer hath done all this: While you have been with *Ioshuah* fighting in the *valley*, *Moses*, *Aaron* and *Hur* have been at prayer upon the *mountain*. God hath poured out upon many parts of the Kingdome, but more especially in and about this great City, a most fervent Spirit of Prayer:

Prayer: In many thousand families you are every day mentioned at the throne of grace; few dayes of your Sessions have passed over, without extraordinary fasting and prayer, either publike or private on your behalfe: And when prayer doth thus ascend, mercies must needs descend. Let God therefore have the chiefe honour for pouring out the spirit of prayer and supplication, the fruit whereof is the upholding your hearts and spirits daily in your work.

as they help
or help not
the Church
of God

And this also intimates the best hope wee have of your good successe for the time to come, even because God hath put it into the heart of the *Kings Majesty and your selves*, to put the whole kingdome into a posture of prayer; we hope your care in putting the Kingdome into a posture of defence, will be serviceable: but wee expect our greatest help and advantage, as from our *daily prayers*, so more especially from those *solemn monthly dayes* of humiliation, that are afforded and appointed us.

And our
hopes of
more.

William the Conquerour, when he was Duke of *Normandy* (according to the superstition of those times) builded many Abbies, Monasteries and Nunneries, and told his friends he was at this cost to strengthen his Kingdome, esteeming them as strong fortifications, wherein he provided many to fight against the devill, the world, and the flesh: this he said according to his light. I can more truly speak from God that in every congregation where godly Ministers and godly people shall, according to publick direction, ly in the dust, fasting, and mourning, and praying before the Lord; there are strong holds set up for the safety of the Kingdome.

All are cured
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Isa. 5. 14.

g Exhor-
tation to
help the
Ch:re by
Prayer.

Motives
thereunto.

Secondly, how sadly doth this speak against many thousands of professed Christians! some cannot pray, some will not pray, sure I am many doe not pray, who in all this long time of *Germanies* afflictions have never separated themselves to afford one dayes prayer for the help of their brethren: and in all our owne exigents and darknesse have never stood upon the walls to help either *England, Scotland, Ireland, King, or Parliament*: these are a miserable generation. And this their not praying for the Church is a sad token against them, that when the Church of Christ shall sing for joy of heart, themselves shall cry for sorrow of heart, and howle for vexation of spirit.

What remaineth then, but that all you who make mention of the Lord, and beare his Name, who have received this mercy, that you may have access to the throne of grace, be quickned up, for the time to come, to stand upon the walls, to give God no rest night nor day, to let *Ierusalem* come into your mind, constantly to do that which Master *Bradford* made the subscription of his letters, pray, pray, pray. God hath done great things for us; but many great things are yet to be done; much rubbish to be removed; many obstructions to be cleared, many enemies to be overthrown. *Ireland* is to be relieved, Religion to be established; Prayer may do all this, we may overmatch all our enemies by prayer, discover all their plots by Prayer. Let us not be traytors against the Church and State, in slighting or forbearing the use of that, which may work all our works for us; this is to betray the forts of the Kingdome

dome. But remember when I exhort you to pray, I mean, First, it must be *prayer* indeed; many can read *prayers*, say *prayers*, sing *prayers*, many can conceive or utter *prayers*, who yet cannot pray: Prayer is a pouring out of the soul to God. And secondly, this spirit poured out in prayer must be a pure spirit: *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not heare my prayer.* And thirdly, this prayer must be a prayer of faith; Pray in faith and waver not; and in a prayer of faith, three things must meet. First, That the things begg'd be according to the will of God. Secondly, That they be begg'd in the name of Christ. Thirdly, that we rely upon the faithfulness of God, for the performance of them. This is to pray in Faith. Fourthly, Our prayers must bee fervent, humble, constant, and when we have prayed, wee must remember, that though prayer be the great meanes, yet prayer is not all the meanes. Prayer must quicken us up to the use of other means, and sanctifie us in the use of other means; other means are fruitlesse without prayer, and prayer not seconded with the use of other means, where they may be had, prevails not. These things you cannot be ignorant of, and therefore I only point at them, especially in these streights of time.

One thing more I must needs advise about, before I passe from this great help of prayer. And that is, in what esteeme praying spirits should bee had amongst all wise men; I know the world flights and scornes them, but in truth they are the very *Chariots and Horsemen of Israel*: Ten praying men might have saved *Sodom*; and the Cities round about.

Solomon.

as they help
or help not
Gods Chnr.

Psal. 66.
And di-
rection
herein.

Exhort-
ation to
prize such
as have the
spirit of
Prayer.

All are cur-
ted or blef-
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Ecclel 9. 14

Rom. 15. 30.

2 King 13

Isa 39. 24.

Ze. b. 8. 21.

Solomon saith, *There was a little City and few men it, and a poore wise man by his wisdome delivered this City from the siege of a great King; Yet no man remembred that same poore man.* Truly thus it is with poore praying Christians, they deliver the Iland and yet no man regards them. *David* knew how to prize such spirits, who, though hee were a King, thought them fit to bee his companions who cal'd upon the name of God. *Paul* knew how to prize them who begged for prayers, as a prisoner for a ran-some, *Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Iesus Christs sake, that you pray for me.* Yea, *Ioash* though an Idolater, when the praying Prophet *Elisba* lay a dying, wept, and cryed, as sensible of loosing the chiefe support of his Kingdome, *O my father, my father, the Chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.* Nay, which is yet more, a heathen Emperour *Marcus Aurelius*, finding by experience the power of the prayers of Christians, gave all the world notice of it, staid the persecution against the Christians, and call'd that band of Christians *Legio fulminatrix*, the thundering band. Let us therefore not fall short of heathens, let us not undervalue or slight them, who carry the Keyes of heaven at their girdle. Verily (Right honourable and beloved) if you knew what blessings they are in the midst of the land, you would take pleasure in them, you would seek for praying friends, praying servants, praying tenants; you would desire to have a stock goe in every one of their vessels. You would say to them all, as they to their companions going up to the house of God, *To pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hostes, I will go also.* Yea, you would lay bold

hold upon the skirt of these men, saying we will goe with you, for we have heard that God is with you. This is the greatest help which we can give to the Church of Christ. This wee doe immediately to God for the Church.

as they help
or help not
Gods Chur.

There are some things also which we must doe for the Church from God: The particulars are innumerable, but in regard the time is wholly spent, I shall give you the summe of all in one short conclusion. And indeed a little time may make it cleare to your understandings, although the practise of it require the study of your whole lives.

2 To employ
all our gifts
and Talents
as Stewards
and servants
for the
Church.

The conclusion is this, Whatsoever abilities any have received in any kind, they are given to them to this very end, to be serviceable and usefull to the Church of Christ with them: *All the manifestations of the spirit* in gifts and graces, *are chiefly given* for this end to profit the Church with; all the livelyhood of our naturall faculties, of our actions, of our worldly wealth, of office or authority, are given us, not for our own carnall ends, no nor primarily for our own salvation; but that with them all wee should be as good Stewards of the manifold graces of God. So that our hands if skilfull to write, should be employed as Secretaries of the Church, our feet as Messengers of the Church, our tongues as Advocates for the Church, our Wisdome and learning as Counsellors for the Church, our wealth as Stewards or Almoners for the Church. Whatever any man hath, the Lord would have his Church to be the Common-storehouse, into which all should bee brought, the body to which all should be serviceable.

1 Cor. 12. 7.

1 Pet. 4. 10.

All are cur-
sed or blef-
sed as they
Exod. 35.

able: just as it was when the Tabernacle was to be built: Not only *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab*, men skilfull in all manner of work, were to bestow their labours upon it; but all with whom any thing was to be found, whether silver or brasse, or fine linnen, or Goats haire, or Badgers skins, or Rams skins; all with a willing heart were to bring it in; yea, the very women, that could spinne either linnen, or woollen, or haire, were all to be employed to further the work of the Tabernacle.

This needs no prooffe, every mans spirit carries him to do all this for whatsoever is his *summum bonum*, his chiefest happinesse; such as make Mammon their God, or their belly, do readily contribute all they *have* or can *doe* to the service of them. I shall shut up all with a brieffe application, First, for reproofe, Secondly for duty.

Application
of this,

1. For re-
proofe of
most who
are stran-
gers to this
duty.

How sadly doth this speak concerning them whose serviceablenesse to the Church consists only in empty and barren wishes! the same which they can and doe afford to any creature which they see to be in distresse; they love the Church, they pity the miseries of the Church, they are sorry for *Germany*, when they think on it, and that is but seldome: They grieve for *Ireland*; but require either their hands to underwrite, their legs to walk, their purses to contribute, their authority to command or countenance, &c. they can spare none of all these. They have a bottomlesse gulf called *selfe*, which swallowes all they *are*, *have*, or *can doe*, and yet is never satisfied. Aske them if they have a heart to do nothing for the Church, they answer readily they pray

pray for it with all their heart, and that is all they ^{as they help} can doe. But let all such false-hearted Christians ^{or help not} know, that the Lord needs none of their help, and ^{Gods Chur.} cares as little for their dry barren prayers, as the poore beggar did for the Bishops blessing, who begging for a peny, but denied that, and put off with the offer of a benediction, told him that hee perceived his peny was better than his blessing, otherwise he had denied him that also. In the meane time think how thou wilt appeare in the day of thine account, when the not having much, but the improving of what we had to our masters advantage, will bring the *Euge bone serve*; when others shall come in and say, Lord thy pound hath gained five pounds; when (as Gregory sayes) *Peter* shall come in with his gaine of *Iudea*, *Andrew* of *Africa*, *Thomas* of *India*, *Paul*, and the rest, of many Nations; Ministers bring in their sheaves of soules, private Christians their gleanings and bundles; And thou appeare empty, *thy* talent buried or embezelled, *thy* age spent, *thy* candle burnt out, nothing done by thee for the Church; when it shall appeare that thou hast had gold and silver to feather *thy own nest*, power and authority to terrifie thy neighbours; like a great Tree crushing or overdropping all that stand neare thee; and hast had this worlds goods, as the Leviathan the Sea, onely to take thy pleasure, and satisfie thy lusts in them. Woe unto thee if ^{Luk. 12 45} thy Master finde thee thus doing. This gaine of thy Talents, will be the losse of thy own soule.

Secondly, for exhortation to all, especially to ^{2 For Exhortation.} you Right honourable, and beloved; What words ^{1 To the} shall ^{House of} ^{Parliament.}

All are cur-
sed or blef-
sed

shall I use? How shall I make up a strength to prevail with you, to give up your selves and all you have so wholly to the Lord and to his Church, that all your other outward occasions may not so much as dare to expect any thing from you, so long as the Church hath need of it; that your pleasures and superfluities, nay your profits & sometimes necessities, may never offer to come in competition with the Church of God, for any thing which you call yours. O that you could hear the Lord speaking to you in the same language as once he spake to *Cyrus*, *For Jacob my servants sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name!* I confesse that instead of exhorting we have just cause to blesse God for you, when we consider how you, who heretofore have lived at ease and in pleasure enjoying the delights of the sons of men, have now changed your pleasures for paines, your delights for dangers, your profits and gains for expences, your houses for lodgings, and still continue to deny your selves in all these things, and goe on in your unwearied labours for the Church and cause of God. This is great matter of praise to God, and honour to your selves. Generous plants and odoriferous spices (they say) grow onely in hot regions: such fruits as yours are not brought forth by every plant, such plants as you grow not on every ground. But go ye on, ye Nobles and Worthies, forget what is behind; God and his people will not forget it: look and presse to the work which yet remains: Get the resolution of *Zisca* that brave *Bohemian* Captain, who not onely was willing to fight while he lived, but bequeathed his skin when he died, to bee made

made a drum head for the service of the warre. Hold ^{as they help or help not Gods Chnr} out to the end, *Claath ye with zeale as with a cloak, put on righteousness as your ornament*: Bee good shepherds still, to rescue and feed the flock committed to you: Be so many *Saviours upon mount Sion*. All ^{Obad. v. ult.} this shall be done for the best Master; all this seed will be sown in the most fruitfull ground, the bosome of the Church: and to quicken you the more, remember how much of the golden time which is gone you have wasted, with *Domitian*, in catching of flies; how much of your estate hath bin spent needlessly in pictures, feasting, buildings, sportings, if not worse, in riot and disorder; how much of your strength hath been bestowed in the service of this world, and the God of it: and now when the gray haire is scattered upon many of you, and God might justly cast you aside as broken vessels, the Lord should choose you, and accept you in the most honourable service that the sons of men are capable of; nay that service which he employed his owne Son in. How readily and cheerfully ought you to consecrate your selvs and service to this work! you should come from your habitations and countries, as the *Levite from the place where he sojourned, with all* ^{Deut. 18 6.} *the desires of your minds to serve the Lord your God.*

And to you the rest, beside your Prayers, the exi- ^{2 To all others,} gence of the Church at this present time requires from you many other things. It may be some of you may be called, as souldiers, to spend your blood in the Churches cause: If you knew the honour and the reward that belongs to such a service, you would say, as the Martyr once, Had every haire on your

All are cur-
sed or blef-
sed

Matth. 25. 35

head a life, you would venture them all in the Churches cause. It may be others of you may, with *Nehemiah*, be called from your own ease and honour to some wearisome task, embrace it readily. It is like your collections and contributions will be more frequent than ordinary, and very shortly in an extraordinary occasion, for the relief of our distressed brethren in Ireland: many in the City of London have set excellent examples, let me provoke you by their pattern, as the Apostle *Paul* did the Corinthians to the like work, by propounding to them the example of Macedonia: Onely remember this, that what you give in this case is interpreted by Christ as given to his owne person; and whom would not this provoke? It is reported of Master *Fox*, that when a poore man asked something of him for Christ Jesus sake, he questioned with the man, whether hee knew Jesus Christ; and finding signes that the man was a Belcever, hee gave him his horse, when hee had no money. I commend not his discretion, but his zeal and charity were admirable. Do somewhat proportionable to the distresse of your brethren; Behold your Saviour comming naked, and hungry, and banished in these his afflicted members. And in whatsoever else the Lord and his Church may have any need of you, remember that Gods blessing is upon them that come to helpe him: and that *Meroz*, and with *Meroz* all others are cursed, who come not out to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

FINIS.



Die Veneris 25. Febr. 1641.

I *T is this day ordered by the House of Commons, that no man shall Print the Sermons Preached on the last Fast day, before the House of Commons, by Master Calamy and Master Marshall, besides themselves, for the space of these two moneths, without the particular Licence and Approbation of the said House of Commons.*

H. Elsyng Cler. Parl. D. Com.

T *Hese are to give notice, that I appoint Master Gellibrand to print my Sermon.*

Stephen Marshall.



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21

Printed by J. G. ...

THE ...

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. in relation to the ...
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I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. in relation to the ...

H. Ellinger, Clerk of the Court.

I have the honor to give notice that I appoint ...
I have the honor to give notice that I appoint ...

Stephen Marshall.

Printed by J. G. ...

May the 3 1780

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every ————— 1-5-0